



News Release

For immediate release: January 28, 2010

(10-013)

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Klickitat County registered nurse suspended on charges of drug tampering

OLYMPIA — The license of Goldendale registered nurse Karen M. Loucks (RN00174208) has been immediately suspended. The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission and the Department of Health took action based on allegations of narcotics tampering and diversion.

Loucks cannot work as a registered nurse in Washington until the charges are resolved.

Charges say Loucks removed narcotics from syringes while employed at Klickitat Valley Hospital in Goldendale. She allegedly replaced the narcotics with saline, and put the syringes back into inventory for patient use. The agency worked with the federal Food and Drug Administration and the Drug Enforcement Agency on the investigation.

Loucks is also charged with multiple incidents of either diversion of narcotic tablets or failure to document administration and proper disposal of the drugs.

Loucks has 20 days to respond to the charges and request a hearing. Charging documents are available online using “Provider Credential Search” on the [Department of Health home page](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov). They’re also available by calling 360-236-4700.

The Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission protects public health and safety in Washington. The commission licenses and disciplines nurses using standards of practice.

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Visit the Washington Department of Health Web site at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for a healthy dose of information.